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*Man in Life and  
in Death.*

BY

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**The Three Objects of the  
Theosophical Society are :**

1. TO FORM A NUCLEUS OF THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RACE, CREED, SEX, CASTE, OR COLOUR.
2. TO ENCOURAGE THE STUDY OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY, AND SCIENCE.
3. TO INVESTIGATE UNEXPLAINED LAWS OF NATURE AND THE POWERS LATENT IN MAN.

All who are interested in the subjects touched upon in this pamphlet, or in the Theosophical view of life's problems, are cordially invited to write for further booklets to the General Secretary, Theosophical Society,

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# Man in Life and in Death.

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It is an axiom in our modern conception of evolution that the more diverse the functions of which an organism is capable, the more complex is its structure. It is therefore in the order of things that man should have a complexity of structure not found in less developed organisms. But the complexity of the human organism revealed to us in anatomy and physiology is only a small part of the full complexity of man; even what we are told in modern psychology lays bare but little of the complexity revealed in Theosophy.

In Fig. 1. we have summarised the main facts about man, as seen in Theosophy; at the birth of an individual, we have several elements which go to make up the unit of humanity whom we call "man."

## The True Soul of Man

They are as follows :

1. The Ego, the true Soul of man, of whom in all cases only a part can ever be manifested in a physical body. This Ego is the Individuality.

2. That part of the Individuality which is manifested in a reincarnation, at a given time, in a particular race, and as either a man or a woman. This is the Personality.

The relation between the Individuality and the Personality has been expressed by many symbols; one, which has been used in the old mysteries, is that of a string of pearls, where the string represents the Individuality, and the pearls the separate Personalities in successive incarnations.

In Fig. 1 another symbol is taken. If we take the three-dimensional, twenty-equal-surfaced geometrical solid, known as the icosahedron, to represent the Individuality, then the Personality is equivalent to one of the twenty two-dimensional triangles which make up the surface of the figure. All the twenty triangles of the surface, even when put together, will always fail to represent one characteristic of the figure, which is its third dimension; and conversely, since a triangle has

only two dimensions, and the solid figure has three, it is possible to obtain an infinity of triangles from the icosahedron.

In a similar fashion, each Personality—as, too, all the Personalities which an Ego makes at successive rebirths—fails to reveal certain attributes of the real Ego ; and also an Ego can make as many Personalities as his force is adequate for, without exhausting his true nature as the Ego.

### The Personality

One Personality only, however, is made by the Ego or Individuality for the purpose of the work done in one incarnation.

3. The Personality (Fig. 1, column 3) at rebirth takes a Mind Body, an Astral Body and a Physical Body.

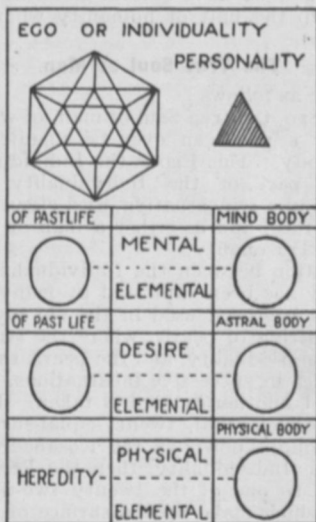


FIG. 1.

4. Each of these three bodies has a life and consciousness of its own, quite distinct from the life

and consciousness of the Personality who uses them. This "body-consciousness" of each vehicle is known as the "mental elemental" of the mind body, the "desire elemental" of the astral body, and the "physical elemental" of the physical body (column 2).

### **Hereditary Factors**

5. The physical body, which is provided by the parents, is the repository of those hereditary "factors" which are in the parental ancestry; out of these parental factors, such factors are selected at the building of the body as are consonant with the karma of the Individuality, and will be useful for the work of the Personality.

6. The astral and mental bodies also have hereditary factors, of a kind; but these are not provided by the parents but by the Ego himself. The astral and mental bodies with which a child is born are replicas of the astral body and the mental body with which the previous incarnation was ended, when the Personality of the previous life discarded his astral body to enter the heaven world, and discarded his mental body at the end of his period in the heaven world.

Man then, when examined in the light of Theosophy, is a very complex entity, the resultant diagonal of a parallelogram of many forces of three planes; for the purpose of coherent study, we can well arrange these forces into three groups:

1. The Individuality, who lives on in the permanent Causal (spiritual) Body from life to life, and retains the memories of the experiences of all his Personalities;

2. The Personality, a more or less partial representative of the Individuality;

3. The "body consciousness" of the three vehicles, the mental, astral and physical elementals.

### **Physical**

We shall consider first the body-consciousness (physical elemental). The physical body has a consciousness which, however limited, is sufficient for the purposes of its life and functions. This consciousness knows how to attract the attention

of the occupier when there is need for it ; when the body is tired, it urges the individual to rest ; when it needs food and drink, it creates in him the desire to eat and drink. When such physical functions work, it is not the Ego who wants to eat and drink, but merely the physical elemental. It is clever enough, through long ancestral habit of heredity, to protect itself ; when attacked by disease germs, it marshals its army of phagocytes to kill them ; when wounded, it organises the cells to heal ; when the body is asleep (that is, when the owner leaves in his astral body and the physical body is tenantless), it pulls up the bedclothes to cover itself against the cold, or turns over to rest in a new position. At any event which it thinks will threaten its life, it instantly does what it can, however limited, to protect itself ; if a shot is fired or a door is slammed, it jumps back ; its consciousness is not sufficient to distinguish between the danger revealed by the sound of a shot, and the absence of danger from the slamming of a door.

Many of these manifestations of the physical elemental are natural enough, and need not be interfered with by the consciousness of the tenant of the body ; but sometimes such interference is necessary, as when a duty has to be performed, and the body is tired and objects, and yet must be forced to work, or when there is a work of danger to be done, and the elemental, fearing for its life, wants to run away, and yet must be held to its task by the will of the owner. In children, the physical elemental is most pronounced ; when a baby cries and screams, it is the elemental who manifests its objections (reasonable to it, though often unreasonable to us), but it is not the Soul of the baby who screams and cries.

This physical elemental's life and consciousness is the reservoir of all the experiences of pleasure and pain of its long line of physical ancestors ; its life was once the life of the desire elementals of savages of long ago. It has all kinds of ancestral memories and tendencies, to which it often reverts, whenever the Ego's consciousness over it is lessened. It is this body-consciousness which is being discovered in the researches of modern psychologists of the schools of Janet, Freud and Jung ; and its vagaries

of consciousness are manifest in our inconsequential, meaningless dreams.

### **The Desire Elemental**

of the astral body is the life of the Elemental Essence. This Elemental Essence is a phase of the life of the Logos at an *earlier* stage of manifestation than even the life of the mineral ; it is on the "downward arc" of life, and is "descending into matter," to become, later, mineral life, and later still, vegetable and animal life. Its chief need is to feel itself alive, and in as many new ways as possible ; it wants a variety of vibrations, and the coarser they are, that is, tending more to materiality, the better pleased it is. This is that "law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," of which S. Paul speaks, the "sin that dwelleth in me."

The desire elemental likes the astral body to be roused, to have in fact "a rousing time" ; variety, novelty, excitement are what it wants on its downward arc of life.

### **The Mental Elemental**

does not like the mind to be held to one thought, and it is restless, and craves as many thought vibrations as it can induce its owner to give ; hence our difficulty of concentration and the "fickleness of the mind."

But the owner of the astral and the mental bodies, the Ego, is on the *upward arc* of life ; millions of years ago he lived as the mineral, the plant and the animal ; such experiences as the mental and desire elementals now prefer, on their downward arc, are not necessarily what he, the Ego who is on the upward arc, finds useful for his work in life. Hence a continual warfare between the Ego and his vehicle, for mastery, graphically described by S. Paul : "The good that I would, I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do."

### **Man's Work**

in life and death is to control his vehicles, and use their energies to accomplish a work mapped out for him by the Lords of Karma and acquiesced in by the Ego. He may succeed or he may fail,

according to the amount of will-power in the Ego, and according to his knowledge of how to exercise it. This battle-ground of life, this crucible of experience, is outlined in Fig. 2.

THE EGO (INDIVIDUALITY)	CAUSAL BODY	* ATMA
		* BUDDHI
		⊗ MANAS
WILL DORMANT		WILL CONTROLLING
SUBCONSCIOUS	NORMAL CONSCIOUS	SUPER CONSCIOUS
PREJUDICES	MENTAL	CONCEPTS
	IDEAS	
CRAVINGS	ASTRAL	AFFECTIONS SYMPATHY
	DESIRES	
REVERSION-ARY HABITS	PHYSICAL	SELF CONTROL PURITY
	FUNCTIONS	

FIG. 2.

The Individuality is the Ego, the "Higher Self," the "Dæmon" of Plato; he has three fundamental attributes described as Atma, the Spirit; Buddhi, the Intuition; and Higher Manas, the Abstract Mind. Will, Wisdom and Activity also describe this fundamental triplicity of the Higher Self. The Personality is the "Lower Self," and is composed of the Lower Manas or the Concrete Mind; the astral or desire nature; the physical functions; and the three vehicles in which these activities manifest. The Higher Self "puts down" a part of himself into incarnation, for the work of transforming experience into faculty.

Everything now depends on how much will-power exists in the Ego, and is being manifested in



the control of his vehicles. Where the will of the Ego dominates the instincts of the mental, desire and physical elementals, the incarnation is a success; where, on the other hand, the three elementals gain the upper hand, the incarnation is so much wasted effort. In the case of most men, there is neither complete domination nor complete slavery; in some things we succeed in dominating, in others we fail. What happens in each case, we can see from the diagram.

The functions of the physical body are neither good nor evil; it is the body's duty to eat to live, to drink to satisfy thirst. The evil begins when a natural function is intensified by the identification of the desire nature of the man with the function. When the purely animal sensations from food and drink are delighted in by the astral body, the body becomes gluttonous and craves stimulants; at first, the astral body dictates when the cravings may be indulged in, but after a while the physical elemental makes the astral body its tool. It is natural enough for a primitive savage to gorge and be a glutton; but when a civilised man allows a purely physical function to hypnotise his desire nature, he is for the time reverting to the savage. The process of reversion is well illustrated in the Japanese proverb about drunkenness:

First the man takes a drink;  
Then the drink takes a drink;  
Then the drink takes the man.

But where the will is dominant, then from the physical functions permanent qualities are developed for the Ego of self-control and purity; it is of great use to the Ego to have perfect control over the physical body, so that the body's technique may be swiftly and fully under the Ego's control in the work in life. Rational and pure diet, perfect health, control over muscle and limb through physical training, are invaluable in transforming functions into self-control and purity.

### **The Astral Body**

In exactly a similar way it is natural for the astral body to desire; it is natural that the astral body should object to offensive smells or to discords in sound, and be pleased at harmonious surroundings

and agreeable tones. The desire nature of the astral body provides a delicate instrument of cognition. Evil begins when the desire elemental dominates and dispossesses for the time the Ego. A natural desire then becomes a craving, and the astral body gets out of control. When a man loses his temper, so that for the time he is not showing a soul's attributes, but those of a wild beast, he has for the time reverted to an early stage of evolution, dragged thereto by the astral body which he cannot control. What we have to understand is that we are *not* the habits of the desire elemental of the astral body, but are to search, for our soul's purpose, such aptitudes in it as are useful for us. Sometimes, through suffering we discover for ourselves this duality in us; a young American girl of thirteen I knew, so discovered it, when one day she came in almost crying because her playmates had teased her in play; and when she was asked by her mother if they had hurt her, replied: "N-no, but they made my feelings feel bad." When we realise that we are not the feelings of the astral body, but possess them, just as we might possess a tennis racket or a gun, then we shall know exactly how much freedom to give to the feelings.

On the reverse side of the picture, the feelings of our astral body, when controlled, can be made most sensitive and delicate, and can be transformed into wonderful attributes of the soul of affection and sympathy; the astral body then becomes a fine instrument upon which we can play, so as to throw the invisible world around us into waves of inspiring and purifying emotions.

### **The Mind**

What has been said above, about the desire elemental of the astral body, applies with even greater force to the mental elemental of the mind body. The mental body has as its natural function that of responding to thought; and thought, when exercised by the Ego, is a means of discovering the world in which man lives. Concrete thought weighs and measures the universe, and the function of abstract thought is to transform all experiences of the mental and lower bodies into eternal con-

cepts which can be incorporated into the soul's nature. But very few of our thoughts are of this nature, for two reasons : first, that the mental elemental often clings to past thoughts of ours, and insists on thinking them, despite our attempts to control it ; and secondly, that what we think is less of our own creation than supplied to us by others. Of the former type are prejudices, which are in reality thoughts which were once *useful* to us in our work in life, though not necessarily *true* ; they are, however, in reality no longer useful, and we are better without them, but the mental elemental retains the strength which we instilled into them, and, to gain better its end, hypnotises us into believing that they are still our thoughts. The prejudices which men have as to the superiority of this or that race, creed, sex, caste, or colour, are largely of this nature. Of the second type are the thoughts of other people which are being continually poured into the mental atmosphere, and which, impinging on our mental bodies, draw out of us automatically a response of like thoughts ; when such thoughts seek admittance, we have to take care that we give welcome only to those which are useful for our soul's work, and that we vigorously reject all others.

### Thought

Certain thoughts of both these types sometimes behave like the "malignant growths" which appear in the human body as cancers and tumours. Some thoughts make definite centres in the mental body and gather round them similar thoughts and absorb their vitality, and so become distinctly malignant mental growths of the mind body. Just as a tumour in the brain, in the beginning, will produce but a slight ache, and afterwards, as it grows larger, will derange many functions of the body, so too is it with these malignant mental growths ; at first, they are hardly evident, except perhaps as unreasonable phantasies and worries ; later, they grow and produce definite mental diseases, like phobias of various kinds and insanity.

The transmutation of the experiences gained through thinking, feeling and acting, into eternal concepts, is only partly accomplished during the

life on earth and in the astral world after death ; the task is continued when the individual begins his life in the heaven world. Under the most ideal and congenial surroundings, with the power to create all such happiness as he longs for, and above all with the wonderful aid of the Mind of the Logos playing upon his mental body and causing it to grow, the man lives his period in the heaven world, developing his will and transforming all his experiences into eternal concepts, and into faculties which more and more reflect his hidden Divine Nature.

### In Heaven

This work which man does during his period " in Heaven " naturally depends upon the strength of his aspirations, and upon the amount of capacity with which he sets to work upon the work of trans-

<i>INTERVALS BETWEEN LIVES</i>								
<i>TYPE</i>	<i>DEGENERATE</i>	<i>SAVAGE</i>	<i>MECHANIC</i>	<i>FARMER</i>	<i>MERCHANT</i>	<i>DOCTOR</i>	<i>'IDEAL-1ST</i>	<i>DISCIPLE</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>1000</i>	<i>1200</i>	<i>2300</i>
<i>HIGHER HEAVEN</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>--</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>BRIEF</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>LOWER HEAVEN</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>260</i>	<i>475</i>	<i>975</i>	<i>1150</i>	<i>2150</i>
<i>ASTRAL PLANE</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>-</i>

FIG. 3.

mutation. These factors determine how long he is "in Heaven," growing through happiness. In Fig. 3 we have a table giving a general average for various types of Egos. When the death of the physical body takes place, the man lives in the astral world for a while; afterwards he passes to the lower heaven, to live there "in Heaven." At the end of the life in the Lower Heaven the mental body, the last remnant of the Personality, is cast aside, and the Ego is once more fully himself, with all his energies, in the higher heaven. After a period, brief or long, dimly conscious or fully aware of the process of rebirth, the Ego once more puts down a part of himself into incarnation to become the new Personality.

We see from the diagram that the degenerate, low type of human being lives about five years in the astral world and, having no spiritual qualities needing Heaven for their growth, returns at once into incarnation. The terms *mechanic*, *farmer*, *merchant*, are used to describe general types; and *doctor* is used to represent professional men in general. But a farmer or a merchant may be highly cultivated and belong really to a higher type of Ego than is represented by his occupation. The cultured man who is definitely idealistic and makes sacrifices for the sake of his ideals, has a consciously active life as the Individuality in the higher heaven. The man consecrated to service under the guidance of a Master of the Wisdom, should he "take his Heaven," will have so purified his astral nature before death that he need have no life in the astral world at all, and can pass at once into his Heaven. We see from the diagram that the period between incarnations may vary from five years to twenty-three centuries. When a child dies, he, too, has his short astral life and his Heaven before return to birth again; the period between lives may vary from a few months to several years, according to the age and the mental and emotional nature of the child.

Many of the facts already mentioned about the hidden nature of man and his finer vehicles, are re-stated in the next diagram, Fig. 4. In the first column we have the seven planes of the Solar

System; in the second we have the four bodies which man now uses.

For all general purposes of study, the soul of man is the Individuality in the causal body. The Ego or Individuality creates a Personality for the

## The Constitution of Man.

DIVINE WORLD				
MONADIC			THE MONAD "SON IN THE BOSOM OF THE FATHER"	*
SPIRITUAL (ATMA)		THE SPIRIT		*
INTUITIONAL (BUDDHIC)		INTUITIONS	THE REIN- CARNAT- ING EGO THE INDIVIDU- ALITY	*
HIGHER HEAVEN	CAUSAL BODY	IDEATIONS		⊙
LOWER HEAVEN	MIND BODY	CONCRETE THOUGHTS		○
ASTRAL	ASTRAL BODY	PERSONAL EMOTIONS IMPULSES	THE PERSON- ALITY "THE MASK"	○
PHYSICAL	ETHERIC PHYSICAL & GROSS PHYSICAL BODY	BODILY ACTIVITIES		○

FIG. 4.

purpose of incarnation, and the Personality has three vehicles, the mental, astral and the physical bodies. Each of these three lower bodies represents one aspect of the Ego; and the Ego in the causal body gives the fundamental tone or temperament for the incarnation. But the Individuality in the causal body is only a partial representation of all his qualities; behind his Higher Manas or Abstract Mind exists the Buddhi, the Divine Intuition, and behind that, the Atma or the indomitable Spirit of God in man. But the Atma, Buddhi, and Manas are themselves reflections of higher attributes still, of the Monad, "the Son in the Bosom of the Father."

### **Man's Work in Life and Death**

is to discover what he is, what is the world, and what is the Logos, the Word "in whom we live, and move, and have our being." Ages of experience and action are required before he begins to grasp this "Wisdom of God in a mystery," and to understand "God's Plan, which is Evolution." Yet this is his eternal work—to know in himself, and in others, the clod, the brute and the God. All life is a workshop where he is taught his work, and many are the instructors who come to help him; these are the religions and the philosophies, the sciences and the arts of his time. Instructors too, unwelcome for the most part, are the sufferings which are his lot. But most welcome of all his instructors, can be the Hidden Wisdom known as Theosophy, which reveals God's Plan with such a fascination to the mind, and with such an inspiration to the heart, as have not yet been found in any other revelation.

### **The Ancient Wisdom**

In a swift survey, we have seen what the Ancient Wisdom says of man and his destiny, of God and His Work. It reveals to the intellect so stupendous a panorama of life's activities in worlds visible and invisible that the mind of man is at first stupefied, and then transported with its entrancing beauty. Above all, the Ancient Wisdom does not speculate, but speaks with authority. "These are the eternal

facts of Nature," say the Teachers of the Wisdom, and They ask us to live a life of idealism, because no other life is possible for reasonable men and women who desire to act in the light of truth and not under the sway of error. Well may the enquirer into Theosophy ask, confronted with its seeming dogmatism: How can I know for myself that all this is true?

Knowledge is of many kinds—what the senses report, what the mind sees, what the heart conceives, and what the intuition knows. One or other of these, or all, are for a man avenues to truth, according to his temperament. We are not all alike, and the value to each of us of the world and its happenings varies according to what we seek from life. As is the fabric of a man's mind and heart, so is his vision of life. But while what is a fact to one man may perhaps be an illusion to another, there is one test of truth which is the same for all. Truth is what compels. A fact of Nature, when once viewed honestly and clearly, thereafter draws all one's nature to act in accordance with it; its compulsion may be swift or slow, but such is the effect on the mind of the Thing—that-is, that the mind can never free itself from the power of that Thing. Furthermore, if what the mind has seen is a vision of Truth and not an illusion, the vision grows day by day, ever revealing larger horizons. Doubts may surge up one after another, but a million doubts cannot invalidate one truth. The soul who thinks that he has grasped the truth can patiently fight on, slaying one by one the hosts of doubt as they arise.

### Facts in Nature

If these many truths of Theosophy are facts in Nature, then they will prove themselves so in time to every one. They must sooner or later be built into the fabric of each man's thinking, if a man is to think truly in accordance with *all* facts. They can be *seen*, one by one, as the faculties necessary for sight are developed; but to see all, from the atom at its work to the Solar System as it carries out the will of the Logos, is not for each one of us at our present stage of limitation. As the consciousness grows, and faculty after faculty is added,



more and more facts will be seen. One by one, each fact, which is at first merely believed in, will be seen with direct vision, and relied upon with an unassailable certainty. To all, there will come the direct vision, but the full vision will come only when the soul becomes the Master of the Wisdom.

Till that day, we can at least each act in the light of the vision of truth which each has. If we will only realise that not only the five senses and the mind are the avenues of sight, but also the aspirations, the imagination, our loves and our spirit of sacrifice, then truth will pour into our natures from many avenues which are now barred by us. Life is a greater thing than can be known by merely one instrument of cognition, the mind ; the mind is a useful instrument to record, but a very limiting one for vision.

There is no surer way for the enquirer, if he desires to prove one by one the truths of Theosophy, than to put into practice one great truth which can be readily accepted. That is the truth of Brotherhood. Let a man remember that another is as himself, that the same life of Nature flows in both, that what is hard for himself is hard for the other too ; let him, looking at his neighbour, say : " This is myself, in a hitherto unknown aspect of me " ; let him study with patience this mysterious part of himself that is outside him ; then let him see if, as he grows in charity and longsuffering, he is not mysteriously impelled to discover about man and God truths of whose existence he was not aware. Loving action is Divine Wisdom at work, and whoso acts lovingly must inevitably come to the Wisdom.

### **Theosophy**

This is the surest way to prove that the truths of Theosophy are realities, and not the beautiful creations of some philosopher's brain. If a man cannot believe in all the teachings of Theosophy, let him at least act as Theosophy teaches. He will then find that the word " Theosophy " describes a wonderful Reality. And when he knows, with every fibre of his being, and in each moment of time, that all that he is—his highest love and sacrifice, his fullest faith and offering—is that

Reality in him, and that apart from It he has no existence, then he will find in himself an instrument of knowledge with which he can discover all for himself. For God's Truth is within a man's own nature; it is not an utter stranger to him, but ever the companion of his dreams. Because man is Divine, the Wisdom is his heritage. Nay, not Wisdom alone, but Power also—power to dare, to suffer, and to conquer. This sense of victory, which brings with it all joy, is the gift which the Ancient Wisdom gives to all who cherish her.